REMARKS

The Office action has been carefully considered. The Office action rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,862,325 to Reed et al. ("Reed"). Further, claim 1 was objected to for a typographical error. Finally, the Office action requested correction of the priority paragraph to reflect the proper status of parent applications and the like (*i.e.*, application and/or patent issue numbers). Applicants have amended the specification to include the information requested and have amended claim 1 to correct the typographical error. Regarding the rejection of claim 1, applicants respectfully disagree.

By present amendment, claim 1 has been amended for clarification and not in view of the prior art. Claims 2-24 have been added as new. Applicants submit that the claims as filed were patentable over the prior art of record, and that the amendments herein are for purposes of clarifying the claims and/or for expediting allowance of the claims and not for reasons related to patentability. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the interview held (by telephone) on February 12, 2004. During the interview, the Examiner and applicants' attorney discussed the claims with respect to the prior art. The essence of applicants' position is incorporated in the remarks below.

Prior to discussing reasons why applicants believe that the claims in this application are clearly allowable in view of the teachings of the cited and applied refer nces, a brief description of the present invention is presented.

The present invention is directed to a robust and efficient service-to-servic communications protocol that handles change information in an identity-centric data access architecture. A service, sometimes called a web service, is a widely accepted term in the industry that is generally defined as a specialized software-based function provided by a network server and operable to communicate with other programs and other services over a network, such as the Internet. In order to facilitate the exchange of information between services, a communications protocol is required because the manner in which each service typically stores data is different from service to service, *i.e.*, an email data construct is different from a calendar appointment data construct.

In one embodiment of the present invention, the communications protocol enables the automatic exchange of data that is associated with changes made to data stored in a particular service. That is, data stored in a particular service may be changed by an appropriate user and it is sometimes important for another user to know immediately about the changed data. As such, the change in data in one service is then communicated to another service. Further, the communications protocol is role-based in that a user may control other users that can subscribe (*i.e.*, be automatically informed) for the user's data changes. Moreover, the communication protocol is robust to handle failure scenarios and also efficient in that changed data of a user may be combined and batched for updates that may be made to other users.

In one implementation, a "publisher" refers to the service which is the source of the data, while a "subscriber" refers to the service that receives the data. The

publisher and subscrib r may maintain updated information about ach other's users in order to accomplish selective data communication and filtering. To provide robustness, requests are acknowledged, and until acknowledged, retried regularly for awhile, with delays between regular retries. Note that the above description is for example and informational purposes only, and should not be used to interpret the claims, which are discussed below.

Turning to the claims, independent claim 1 recites a system comprising, a first service for providing access to data based on an associated identity of each user, a second service for providing access to data based on an associated identity of each user, and a communications mechanism configured to exchange information between the first service and the second service, the first service configured as a publisher of change data made by users via the first service, and the second service configured as a subscriber of the change data, the communications mechanism communicating change information of the first service to the second service including determining the role of each subscribing user and filtering the data based on each determined role.

As mentioned above, the Office action rejected claim 1 as being anticipated by Reed. More specifically, the Office action contends that Reed teaches each and every element recited in claim 1. Applicants respectfully disagree and point out several areas where Reed falls short of teaching the elements recited in claim 1 below.

Regarding the first element of claim 1, the Office action contends that Reed teaches a first s rvice (provider computer in R d) for providing access to data